

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL, IN
SUBJECT: NORTON SIMON NATARAJ

SUMMARY: HALF STEP FORWARD, WE THINK. END SUMMARY.

1. NORTON SIMON FOUNDATION PRESIDENT ROBERT MACFARLANE WAS EAST THIS WEEK. TALKS WITH DOUGLAS DILLON AND ERIC GONSALVES SEEM TO HAVE IMPROVED PROSPECTS FOR HAPPY ENDING, ESPECIALLY TALKS WITH DILLON. APPARENTLY OLIVE BRANCH IS OUT FROM MET TO SIMON FOUNDATION.
2. SESSION WITH GONSALVES WHICH KUX ALSO ATTENDED LESS CONCLUSIVE, BECAUSE FOUNDATION YET TO DECIDE HOW IT WISHES TO PROCEED. MACFARLANE EXPLAINED FOUNDATION LAWYERS BELIEVE SIMON CAN STAND PAT. THEY ARGUE THAT SIMON IS HOME FREE REGARDLESS OF OUTCOME OF CHARGES OF CUSTOMS VIOLATIONS. IF ILLEGALITIES PROVEN, SIMON CAN SUE BEN HELLER; IF NOT, SIMON HAS CLEAR TITLE TO NATARAJ. MACFARLANE, HOWEVER, SUPPORTS CULTURAL BRIDGE CONCEPT AS PREFERABLE COURSE (AND KUX NATURALLY SECONDED THIS VIEW).

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3. GONSALVES REITERATED GOI WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW ANY

PATH NORTON SIMON WISHED: (A) LAW SUIT ROUTE; (B) LIMITED EXCHANGE OF NATARAJ FOR ITEMS OF EQUIVALENT "AESTHETIC VALUE" OR (C) BROADER CULTURAL EXCHANGE CONCEPT WHICH

MACFARLANE DISCUSSED DURING LAST MEETING. GONSALVES STRESSED GOI MUCH PREFERRED OPTION (C).

4. MACFARLANE ASKED WHETHER FOUNDATION/GOI TALKS COULD TAKE PLACE IN WASHINGTON RATHER THAN DELHI. GONSALVES SAID THIS WOULD BE FINE WITH GOI, ALTHOUGH DETAILS OF SPECIFIC ART OBJECTS TO BE SENT TO US, ETC. WOULD, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT IN INDIA WITH MIN EDUCATION OFFICIALS.

5. MACFARLANE PROBED AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT WHEN GONSALVES WOULD DROP GOI OBJECTION TO INCLUSION OF NATARAJ IN MET EXHIBIT. GONSALVES SAID GOI WOULD DROP OBJECTION WHEN AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE REACHED ON RETURN OF NATARAJ,EVEN THROUGH SPECIFICS NOT WORKED OUT.

6. COMMENT: MACFARLANE WAS BOUYED BY TALKS BUT NOT CERTAIN WHICH WAY HIS BOSS WOULD ULTIMATELY LEAN. HE IS SUGGESTING THAT SIMON SEE TIKKI KAUL WHEN IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK. KISSINGER

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